

The Briefing



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Calvin and Sandy's survey

[Gordon Cheng \(http://matthiasmedia.com/briefing/authors/gordon-cheng/\)](http://matthiasmedia.com/briefing/authors/gordon-cheng/) | 5 February, 2010

I'm sorry, Sandy, at the end of a fairly exhausting year, during which God has continued to show his goodness and kindness in all sorts of ways, I lack the will and strength to fill in [your survey \(http://solapanel.org/article/a_very_sola_panel_survey_paul_grimmond/\)](#) about books I've read this year. Although may I take this moment to recommend the most brilliant—and, in fact, the only—book ever released by Matthias Media under the title [Encouragement \(http://www.matthiasmedia.com.au/ehwcl\)](http://www.matthiasmedia.com.au/ehwcl), as well as the chortle-worthy, friendly but occasionally disappointing [Diaries 1969-1979: The Python Years \(http://www.booktopia.com.au/diaries-1969-1979-the-python-years/prod9780312384883.html\)](http://www.booktopia.com.au/diaries-1969-1979-the-python-years/prod9780312384883.html) by Michael Palin.

So, sorry not to have been more detailed in responding to your survey, Sandy, but let me at least mention one book and one blog that Sola Panel readers could do worse than check out.

[Calvin \(http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/book.asp?isbn=9780300120769\)](http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/book.asp?isbn=9780300120769) by Bruce Gordon is the book you need to read if you want to know who Calvin was (as far as you can work these things out on a man's 500th birthday). A quote:

God is the dwelling place of those who have no home in the world. In [Psalm 102 \(https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%20102\)](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%20102) Calvin picks up on the image of the owl to convey the experience of exile: 'As the soul is like a bird cut off from others, so are the Israelites in exile. Although the land is rich, they are cut off from their home and temple. It is described as solitary or alone because it has been bereaved of its mate, and so deeply affected are these little birds when separated from their mates that their distress exceeds almost all sorrow.' Further, 'the people call out that they are abused and insulted by their enemies. The Holy Spirit has dictated this prayer to them

as a means of defence.' The psalms, then, are the articulation of Christians' deepest needs brought to expression by the Spirit. (Bruce Gordon, *Calvin*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2009, p. 286.)

Read the Psalms for yourself to see how right Calvin is.

The blog? Make sure you heed the advice of the name, [Forget the Channel \(http://www.lionelwindsor.net/\)](http://www.lionelwindsor.net/), because you can be sure Lionel didn't choose it lightly. But if you want to understand righteousness and be guided into what the Bible has to say about it, this blog, this year is where you should make a start.

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